

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05 H-01 INR-10
L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 SP-02 SS-15 ICA-11 A-01
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R 281416Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY LAGOS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 8187
INFO AMCONSUL IBADAN
AMCONSUL KADUNA

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: PINT, PGOV, NI
SUBJECT: STUDENTS RIOT IN LAGOS

REF: (A) IBADAN 488, (B) LAGOS 5252

1. SUMMARY: STUDENTS WENT ON A RAMPAGE IN MAINLAND LAGOS THURSDAY APRIL 28 DESTROYING A NUMBER OF VEHICLES FOLLOWING BURIAL OF STUDENT KILLED LAST WEEK AT UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS. WE ALSO HAVE REPORTS THAT SECONDARY STUDENTS IN ILE-IFE CAUSED EXTENSIVE DAMAGE ON WEDNESDAY. NIGERIAN UNION OF TEACHERS HAS THREATENED STRIKE ACTION BUT APPEALED TO THE GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE ITS PROBLEMS. THERE APPEARS TO BE A DECREASE IN SYMPATHY FOR STUDENTS. END SUMMARY.

2. FOLLOWING THE BURIAL OF THE UNIVERSITY OF LAGOS STUDENT KILLED LAST WEEK, STUDENTS REPORTEDLY RIOTED IN MAINLAND LAGOS YESTERDAY, BURNING VEHICLES, BEATING PEOPLE AND BLOCKING ONE OF THE MAIN THOROUGHFARES, HERBERT MACAULEY
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STREET. THERE WERE NO CONFIRMED REPORTS OF THE NUMBER OF INJURIES OR DAMAGES. ACCORDING TO PUNCH THE RIOTERS CONCENTRATED ON GOVERNMENT VEHICLES, BUT DID DAMAGE OTHERS, INCLUDING A VAN BELONGING TO THE DAILY TIMES. REPORTEDLY BUSES WERE STOPPED BY STUDENTS SEEKING POLICEMEN. REFLECTING A GRADUAL LOSS OF SYMPATHY FOR

STUDENTS FOLLOWING INCIDENTS IN IBADAN (SEE REF A)
PUNCH REPORTS THAT PASSENGERS ON ONE BUS DISGUISED
A POLICEMAN TO PROTECT HIM FROM STUDENTS.

3. DAILY TIMES ALSO REPORTS THAT SECONDARY
STUDENTS WENT ON A RAMPAGE IN ILE-IFE WEDNESDAY
ALLEGEDLY BURNING THE PRISON, A POLICE POST
AND VEHICLES. THEY ALSO ATTACKED THE MINISTRY
OF EDUCATION AND THE LOCAL SCHOOLBOARD BUILDING.
ACCORDING TO TIMES, 'LIKE FLYING CARDS AND
ACROBATIC DANCERS, GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS ESCAPED
THROUGH WINDOWS AND...RAN HELTER SKELTER TO
SAFETY.' POLICE REPORTEDLY BROKE UP THE DEMON-
STRATIONS AND THERE WAS AN UNCONFIRMED REPORT
THAT ONE STUDENT WAS KILLED. TEACHERS'
COLLEGE STUDENTS IN ABEOKUTA REPORTEDLY ALSO
DEMONSTRATED ON WEDNESDAY.

4. IN A SEPARATE ACTION, AN ULTIMATUM DEMANDING
GOVERNMENT ACTION ON CONDITIONS OF SERVICE BY
THE NIGERIAN UNION OF TEACHERS (NUTS) HAS EXPIRED,
RAISING THE SPECTER OF A WALKOUT BY THE 400,000

SECONDARY, PRIMARY AND TEACHERS' COLLEGE

TEACHERS IN NIGERIA. DESPITE EARLIER STATEMENT
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OF SUPPORT FOR STUDENTS (REF B), NUTS SECRETARY
GENERAL S. K. BABALOLA HAS APPEALED TO THE
MINISTRY OF LABOR TO APPOINT A CONCILIATOR TO
DEAL WITH PROBLEM RATHER THAN WALKING OUT AT
THIS TIME.

5. SOKOTO UNIVERSITY HAS ALSO CLOSED, LEAVING ONLY
THE UNIVERSITY OF CALABAR POSSIBLY REMAINING OPEN.

6. COMMENT: THERE APPEARS TO BE SOME LOSS OF
SYMPATHY FOR THE STUDENTS AS REFLECTED IN THE
REPORT OF BUS PASSENGERS PROTECTING POLICE FROM
THE STUDENTS, IBADAN'S REPORT OF MARKET WOMEN'S
APPEAL AND EDITORIALS IN THE PUNCH AND SKETCH.
PUNCH SAID, 'THE STUDENTS CANNOT CONTINUE TO PRO-
VOKE AND BAIT THE WHOLE MIGHT OF THE STATE AND
EXPECT TO GET AWAY WITH IT...SINCE THE EVENTS OF
LAST WEEK, THE GOVERNMENT HAS SHOWN ADMIRABLE
RESTRAINT. WE BEG THE STUDENTS NOT TO ALLOW THE
ULTRA-MILITANTS IN THEIR MIDST AND OTHER EXTERNAL
AGENTS OF DESTABILIZATION TO FORCE THE GOVERNMENT TO
A STRONGER REACTION.'

WYMAN

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